MR. T. C. THOMMEN (*Secretary to Government*): I think they are public.

MR. S. CHATTANATHA KARAYALAR (*Shencotta*): May I ask, Sir, whether Government give instructions from time to time regarding the attitude to be taken by their representative on matters that come up for discussion?

MR. T. C. THOMMEN (*Secretary to Government*): Yes, Sir.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*): How many times in the year does the Board meet?

MR. T. C. THOMMEN (*Secretary to Government*): About three or four times.

The Aquarium in the Public Gardens.

64. *MISS HEPZIBAH GNANASIKAMONY (*Nominated*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) if they have officially closed the aquarium in the Public Gardens; and

(*b*) if the answer to part (*a*) be in the affirmative, the reasons why the aquarium was closed?

RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The experiment did not prove successful.

MISS HEPZIBAH GNANASIKAMONY (*Nominated*): May I know, Sir, how the aquarium came to be closed?

RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*): When it was first opened there was a rush of visitors to it, probably on account of the novelty, but subsequently there were very few visitors excepting some zoology students from the colleges. It was also considered not safe to leave the aquarium in the condition in which it was The bridge to cross over to the aquarium was old and ricketty and the building itself had cracks and was in an unsound condition. So Government thought it better to close down the aquarium.

MISS HEPZIBAH GNANASIKAMONY (*Nominated*): In view of the educational importance of the aquarium in the State, will the Government consider the question of reviving it and working it with success?

RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Sir, I think it is not worth while to consider the question of reviving it. The question for consideration will be to start a new aquarium. That depends upon funds. It will require a pretty large amount to start a really good aquarium of educational value to the public and to students. It cannot be considered at present owing to financial stringency.

MISS. HEPZIBAH GNANASIKAMONY (*Nominated*): May I know from the member whether government admit the educational importance of the aquarium?

RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*): Yes, they do: but the difficulty of starting an aquarium on proper lines at present is to find funds.

MR. N. K. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Neyattinkara I*): May I know the amount so far spent on this account?

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RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : Not much, I think. The officer in charge of the Public Gardens scraped together some funds from his own budget and was able to start the aquarium at a small cost. Later on, the maintenance charges too did not come to much. I have not got the exact figures, but the expenditure could never have come to a large amount.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*) : May I know the number and variety of the fishes preserved in the aquarium ?

RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : Sir, I am unable to furnish the information. I was told that some fresh water fish were kept in the aquarium and some of them died owing to insufficient aeration and other causes. At the time of closing down the aquarium I really cannot say how many survived.

MR. K. R. ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*) : May I know whether the want of attractiveness of the aquarium was due to the scanty varieties of fish ?

RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : It was really because the aquarium was not started on proper lines. Those honourable members who have been to Madras and seen the aquarium there as also the aquarium that was here may be able to know the difference between the two. Government must admit that the aquarium here was not started on proper lines and so the fish died ; and the number of visitors too fell off after the novelty was over.

MR. PACUDE A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Vilavankod*) : What became of the fish ?

RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : The dead fish were thrown away ; and I cannot say what happened to the live ones.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*) : Was the failure of the experiment due to the fact that it was not properly started and conducted ?

RAO BAHADUR DR. N. KUNJAN PILLAI (*Chief Secretary to Government*) : Sir, I have stated that an aquarium to be started on proper lines requires a larger amount. It was not so in this case. Here the experiment was tried on a very small scale and I must say it did not prove satisfactory. It was therefore thought better to close down the aquarium than to keep it in a bad condition.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE ANSWERING OF INTERPELLATIONS.

PRESIDENT : I have a word to say before we proceed to the discussion of the budget. Mr. Velayudhan Pillai brought to my notice the fact that a very small number of questions are being tabled for each day so that the House could not utilise the first hour for that purpose. The Chair then gave a promise that the matter will be investigated and everything done to table a larger number of questions. That investigation has been made. And I can tell the honourable members that, from tomorrow onwards, a fairly large number of questions will be

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